

Fishing at Isle Royale

A Michigan fishing license is required for fishing in Lake Superior, including narrow bays and harbors, and when transporting fish from the island to the mainland. If you are under 17 years of age, you may fish without a license. Licenses are not required to fish on the inland waters of Isle Royale; possession limits are the same as those set by the State of Michigan. Also see additional information on this page regarding

Marine Warning: Boaters beware, Lake Superior levels are significantly down. Use caution in your travels, especially around docks and reefs.

Fishery Conservation

With its multitude of islands and bays on Lake Superior, as well as several lakes and streams on the interior of the island, Isle Royale provides many opportunities for outstanding recreational fishing for wild, native fish. How can you help to conserve and minimize damage to the Isle Royale fishery?

- Catch only what you plan to keep or eat. Catch and release, while encouraged, can be damaging and very stressful on fish.
- Know the minimum size of fish so that if they are too small they can be quickly released.
- Release larger fish and keep medium size fish to insure future productivity. Larger, more mature fish produce more offspring than smaller fish.
- Instead of killing trophy fish, consider a modern graphite mount produced from a picture of the fish.
- Return fish to the water as soon as possible. While unhooking them, keep fish in the water as much as possible.
- If fishing from shore, try to remove hooks while the fish are in the water; don't drag them up on the bank.
- Try not to handle fish, but if you need to, do so with a wet hand. Release handled fish gently by allowing them to swim from your hands rather than throwing them back into the water.
- Do not squeeze the fish or place fingers in the gills, since a torn gill can cause the fish to bleed to death.
- Remove the hook gently. Pliers work best. Cut the line near the hook if a fish is deeply hooked. A steel hook will decompose in time.
- Use only artificial lures (required in inland waters) as exotic species can accidentally be introduced by using live bait and live bait are often swallowed deeper resulting in more damage to fish.
- Use single, barbless hooks or bend down the barbs on the hooks. Using larger spoons when fishing for larger fish such as Northern Pike will help prevent catching undersize fish.
- If moving from Lake Superior to an inland lake, change to a different spool of line. This will help prevent spread of the spiny water-flea, an exotic aquatic invertebrate that competes with juvenile fish for food. It has been found in Lake Superior waters of the park but is not yet documented in inland waters. Spiny water fleas can adhere to fishing line and be easily spread to other bodies of water.

special brook trout regulations. Anglers should refer to the Michigan fishing regulations for possession limits and detailed license requirements for Lake Superior (also see the chart on page 7 for a brief guide to regulations). Only 24-hour licenses are available on the island and only when concession services are open. You may purchase a Michigan fishing license online at www.michigan.gov/dnr.

Disposal of Fish Remains

At Rock Harbor, please use the fish cleaning station. At other locations, the preferred method is to dump remains chopped up into pieces 4" or less in deep (50' or deeper) water. This reduces the unsightly remains and odors around campgrounds and the unnaturally large gathering of gulls at these sites. At inland lakes the preferred method of disposal is to chop fish remains into pieces 4" or less and deposit into deep water via canoe. If you do not have a canoe, you could request the assistance of a canoeist. The alternate method is to chop up remains into pieces 4" or less and move at least 200 feet (75 steps) from campground and throw remains as far as possible into deep water. These steps will eliminate the potential for attracting and feeding wildlife at campgrounds. Please clean fish away from docks and campgrounds. Do not throw remains in shallow water near shore or throw remains to gulls.

Transporting Fish to the Mainland

You are allowed only one day's catch in your possession. While the license holder remains on the Island, Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) allows those with DNR permits to ship legally-taken fish on the *Ranger III*, *Isle Royale Queen IV*, *Wenonah*, *Voyageur II* and the seaplane. This one-time per year permit covers up to a single day's catch limit. Fish must be claimed when the ferry service arrives at their destination. Permits may be obtained by writing: Department of Natural Resources, 427 U.S. 41 North, Baraga, Michigan 49908-9627 or calling (906) 353-6651.

Fishermen returning on the *Ranger III* must check in their fish with the ship's purser. Fish cannot be transported in coolers on private boats onboard the *Ranger III*.

Fish Consumption Advisory

Contaminants discovered in the Park ecosystem remind us that although Isle Royale is remote, it is part of a global system. Ongoing research in six inland lakes (Sargent, Siskiwit, Eva, Shesheeb, Wagejo, and Anglemorm) shows fish with mercury levels exceeding the State of Michigan fish consumption advisories.

For information on fish consumption advisories check with park staff or visit the Michigan Department of Community Health website at: <http://www.michigan.gov/mdch>

Jay Glase, Fishery Biologist, and Larry Kangas, Chief, Law Enforcement Division

Why Special Brook Trout Regulations at Isle Royale?

Due to incredible popularity and historic over-harvest, coaster brook trout numbers at Isle Royale have been declining for several years. Recent surveys indicate populations are dangerously low and may be at risk of disappearing unless they have more protection.

- The Tobin Harbor population of adult brook trout may be **less than 150 fish**.
- The Siskiwit Bay population, despite 5 years of regular stocking, is probably even lower than at Tobin Harbor.

Due to these low numbers, NPS and Michigan DNR have implemented protective regulations at Isle Royale in order to help with the recovery of this once common fish.

Lake Superior Waters (extend 4.5 miles out from the island)

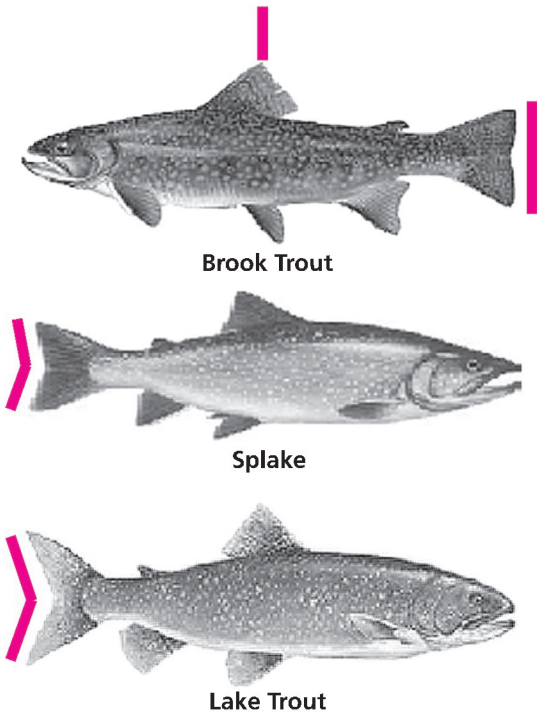
Catch and release only for all brook trout, including all bays and harbors.

Inland Waters

Catch and release only in all streams and Hidden Lake. Artificial lures and barbless hooks only in all streams and Hidden Lake.

You can help

by knowing the regulations and how to identify brook trout. The nearly square tail and wormlike pattern on the back and dorsal (top) fin of a brook trout are usually a good way to distinguish it from lake trout and splake. If you're uncertain about the species you catch, return it to the water.



(Images from LandBigFish.com)

Rock Harbor Lodge and Windigo Store

Lodge Rooms

Sixty rooms are available; each accommodates four and offers private bath. Available 6/5 thru 9/7.

Housekeeping Rooms

Twenty duplex cottages accommodate six and are furnished with utensils, dishware, private bath, double bed and two bunk beds. Available 5/25 thru 9/7.

Gift Shop and Dockside Store

Gift Shop offers handcrafted gifts, apparel, photo supplies, postcards, souvenirs, daily fishing licenses, and tackle. The store offers groceries, freeze-dried foods, fishing tackle, stove fuel, camping, hiking, and boating accessories, showers, laundry facilities, and sundries. Gift Shop 6/5 thru 9/7 – Store 5/25 thru 9/7

Lodge Dining Room & Greenstone Grill

Hearty meals, including fresh Lake Trout. Visitors welcome for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Food service open daily, 6/5 thru 9/7.

Marina and Water Taxi

Offers 450 feet of dock space in Rock Harbor, accommodating boats up to 65 feet. Electrical, fresh water hook-up, sewage pump-out, gasoline, and diesel fuel, motorboat, canoe, and kayak rental available. Water taxi



service drops off or picks-up visitors, canoes, or kayaks at many island docks. Available 6/5 thru 9/7

Fishing Charters and Sightseeing

Charters are fully equipped. For details on sightseeing trips refer to page 4.

Windigo Store and Marina

Offers groceries, cold sandwiches, camping supplies, stove fuel, daily fishing licenses and tackle, gifts and photo supplies. The marina offers gasoline, pump-out service, and motorboat, canoe and kayak rental. Shower and laundry facilities available. Open 6/5 thru 9/9.

The cost for utilities on Isle Royale is much higher than on the mainland. A utility surcharge will be added to the cost of all goods and services.

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